



CONNECTING YOUTH & FAMILIES TO SERVICES

WHAT DOES IT MEAN: THE RIGHT SERVICE FOR THE RIGHT NEED AT THE RIGHT TIME

Children, youth, and families in need of behavioral health treatment services will find the most success when they are connected with the service best suited to meet their treatment needs. Referrals for services can be made with parent/guardian permission, by anyone who is supporting family members in their efforts.



CONSIDERATIONS WHEN MAKING REFERRALS:

- **Talk with youth and caregivers before making any referrals for services.**
 - Help identify the needs and changes they are hoping to see in treatment.
 - Consider using this [treatment planning guide](#) to help families identify their goals for treatment even before making referrals. Understanding the family concerns/needs can help in identifying the most appropriate services.
 - Learn about the child/youth's diagnosis(es) and symptoms and know which services are best suited to treat them.
 - Always focus on looking for the [lowest level of service intensity and least restrictive setting](#) that can meet the needs.
- **Be able to describe, in detail, all potential services to youth and families**
 - Educate yourself on available services and their intended purpose
 - [Printable list of Maine Children's Behavioral Health Services- \(CBHS\)](#)
 - [Educational material about Maine Children's Behavioral Health Services \(CBHS\)](#)
 - Ensure child/youth and families understand the services and their role in treatment before making referrals.
 - What the service is intended to treat.
 - All family member roles in treatment.
 - Time commitment of each service.
 - None of the services are intended to be support or supervision but rather active treatment for the child/youth and family.
 - Provide family with the [CBHS Info Sheet](#) for the service you are recommending
- **Match service referrals to identified need**
 - If the child/youth has an existing provider, ask that person how they can change their treatment plan to meet changing/increasing needs.
 - Always ask if caregivers have been included in treatment, even in outpatient.
 - Ask if treatment sessions can be increased when there is increased need.
 - If seeing an outpatient therapist, ask if the therapist can do some sessions in the home.
 - Assist in making referrals to the service that is best suited for the needs.
 - Follow up on referrals regularly to ensure referral is active and remains necessary.
- **Support youth and family investment in services**
 - Explain [importance of family and caregiver involvement](#) in treatment.
 - Help family address concerns and barriers of engaging in services.
 - Help family address concerns with specific providers before opting out of a service with that provider.
- **Track progress and be ready to support the family with their questions and needs.**
 - Ensure child/youth and family understand the treatment plan.
 - Help families advocate for treatment plans to change when needed.
- **If the most appropriate service is not clear, talk to your supervisor and/or reach out to Children's Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) for guidance.**
 - [Printable list of CBHS staff](#)